[illegible]

The only religious rites and ceremonies in which the Kudu participate are those offered by Catholic missionaries. Such ceremonies include baptism, prayers, hikes, confirmation, and communion. During the summer, nightly devotions in Lower Fun bring many people together to recite one or two decades of the rosary. The prayers are said in English, although a few people also know them in Kudu. Apart from such occasions, prayer is limited. Kwan Jin said that during his wife's illness he had prayed for her improvement. The woman died and he is reported to have expressed resentment that his prayers were not answered. During the summer, Mass is celebrated every morning but on women is a limited to Sundays. There still the symbolism and liturgy of the rite are understood could not be learned. When attending church services the men generally separate, men sitting on the left side of the building and women on the right.

Where people go to confessions about once a year to confess such sins as drinking, smoking, and social offenses. The confession, according to Old Man, is prompted by the priest asking questions like: "Did you smoke?" and then requesting the number of times that the offense was committed. Following confession the people may receive communion.

Christmas is the most important ceremonial holiday in the entire settlement so celebration is sometimes begun on Christmas eve, when a horse is killed, drinking may continue for several days. If the people are in the vicinity, Mass is attended. Christmas morning and, sometimes, on afternoon church party is given for children. In the summer of 1982, a religious conflict occurred in connection with the consecration of the new church in Lower Fun. The rite was performed by the bishop of the diocese and was witnessed by all the Kudu chief in the community. On the following morning a solemn high Mass was celebrated by the bishop assisted by two concelebrants. Both ceremonies were marked by considerable glamor and were appreciated by the Kudu.

Attitudes of the people toward the priests vary, but in general are marked by respect and some avoidance or aggravation. In the case of many people one of the reasons for attending religious rites is a desire not to upset themselves in the direct presence of the missionaries. The priests, who are young men, try to be friendly and democratic and appear to be sincerely concerned to the Kudu' temporal and spiritual welfare. They direct numerous of the ministrations to the life of the people is essential and may lead to an informal boycott of the church and school. Old Man stated that once when a missionary reported him to the police for drunkenness, he remained away from church until the priest actually

[illegible] and the corpse was passed to other [illegible]. This was so the ghost would not find the way into the house again. Those who had carried the corpse to the hole did not follow it outside but after passing it out turned back and went out the door. It seemed this was for fear the souls of the corpse might be going along with the deceased. When the corpse was about to be taken out, all the young children in the house were covered up so they could not see the corpse being removed. When the coffin was out of sight in some room, and not until turned to other room, the children were uncovered.

[illegible]

There was no custom of passing children over fire or making them jump over fire on the back of a parent, but it was customary to make children jump on their deceased parent's feet. This was done shortly before the corpse was carried out. The other relatives the young children jumped across the portion of the skin blanket extending beyond the deceased parent's feet. Any who were too young to jump were passed over or by their guardian [illegible], the relative who saw fit to look after them and their [illegible] relatives with him, (or her) directly towards sunrise or the Sky Dome. After entering some distance, their guardian passed the beside over each one of them to turn left them, holding up the beside respective level with the face, going up, he then

sharply along them as if blowing something away. At the same time he prayed, "May these children be healthy and strong. May they never be sick". It is said this ceremony was for the purpose of removing (scattering together and then blowing away) all evil from the children.

A peculiar custom in vogue was as follows: If the deceased was a child and the mother wanted to have it reborn by herself, she tied a string tied around her waist, the other end of which was attached to the head or foot or sometimes other part of the corpse. Break (belonging origin or any kind of break) was opened in the hole in the lodge (through which the body was removed) and the string from the corpse passed along the break. A number of potsherds, consisting of short stroke were strewed along this path with their sides leaning in the direction of where the mother was. There were to help the soul to ghost to follow in the desired direction. Corpses were generally buried in the day time. Part of the string would burn up during the night or early morning. The woman's husband cut out the string [illegible] with. The long part of the string was burnt and the short part was allowed to remain attached to the woman for four days. It was then removed and burnt. If the mother did not desire to have the child come back to herself, she might select a married daughter

person killing someone, such as an enemy, or undertaking a war expedition to appease their sorrow for the death of their relative. 764 782

Songs, it seems, chiefly mourning songs or death chants, were sung at the pyre, where the body was consumed slowly. In singing these songs the people swayed their bodies from side to side in peculiar actions. 764 533

The people who prepared the corpse, carried it, constructed the pyre and did all the work in connection with the corpse and its cremation were always of the opposite phratry of the deceased and all were elderly. Young people never did this work and seldom any below forty years of age. 764

No restrictions were put on these people in the way of eating and purification, etc. All they had to do was afterwards to wash their hands and faces. They /were/ not required to purge themselves by drinking medicine nor by pushing twigs down their throats to induce vomiting. The latter custom was unknown or at least never followed by the Tahltan in any ceremonies, such as those connected with death, puberty, etc. 764 783

After the funeral fire had burnt out, the charred bones of the deceased were collected and wrapped in skin. They were then placed on the top of a small crib of logs built up a few feet from the ground 764

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahanni ND12
Upper Liard

enemies were encountered and continued until one or the other side weakened to the point where it sued for peace or fled. Men were not spared for capture. As victims fell warriors wielding stone knives detached scalps by cutting above the ears and along the brow. Then the hair was seized and the scalp torn free from the flesh. Decapitation was not practiced.* To use for an armistice one side might raise a slab of wood on which were painted figures of animals and fish. Lasting peace was promised when an enemy surrendered or when all potential avengers were killed. However fear and mistrust often prevented both sides from immediately negotiating friendly relations on a verbal basis. When peace negotiations were conducted on the spot, the victors usually demanded a number of women by way of indemnity. Unwilling as the latter might be, they were always forced to go. At other times fighting lasted until the enemy had lost many men or had been completely routed. The victors then displayed an orgy of sadism and hate. The bodies of the dead received obscene treatment, a woman's legs being spread apart to expose her naked genitals. Necrophilia, however, was never practiced. Live children were spiked on sharp stakes set around a fire. Live men might be suspended from trees by the feet, a separate line securing each limb. A heavy pole would then be dropped into the crotch of the helpless victim. Neither side troubled to dispose of the dead. Ceremonial cannibalism also followed fighting, but instead of flesh only the raw "belly fat" was eaten. This ritual meal strengthened the victors and enabled them, should necessity demand, to eat raw meat in the future. Young men serving the expedition as porters did not join in the rite.* Instead of partaking in the cannibalistic meal a man could fast for four days, eating only a very little food and drinking small quantities of water. Women and children formed the bulk of the prisoners. Mostly the children were killed during the homeward journey, the custom being to strangle or knife one child at each camp made by the returning expedition. Each night a society took its turn in secuting a child. In winter, for every passenger killed a marker of spruce brush was thrust into the ice at the center of some lake where the group happened to be camping. Still other young prisoners might be killed after the expedition had returned to camp. Women captives became wives who initially had to be carefully watched or risk lost they seek to escape.* If any men had been taken they were permitted to marry daughters of the captors. Upon begetting a child the man received his freedom. Exchange of prisoners was unknown. Following a battle every man who had shed enemy blood ritually tore his sleeve. "To kill a man puts human blood in the killer's sleeve," the informant explained metaphorically. Such blood now received the opportunity of flowing out. (A man performed the same rite when his brothers-in-law killed game.*) The victors "did

* Heads were taken by the Tlingit and scalped on the expedition toward home "unless they had had time to do so on the spot," designing a specifically stated to have been done in such a way as to exclude the men. Swanton, *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 446.

* A similar custom is mentioned as current among the Eskimo with the intention of preventing "a spirit which inevitably follows a man killing, as well as general bad luck." Osgood, *Contributions to the Ethnography of the Kutchin* (1936), 87.

* For the distribution of captive women within the community see below, p. 126.

* See below, p. 126.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard
Dease River

727 not think of another war," a statement which suggests that fighting brought about rather full release of suppressed anger and strain.*

727 783 On the return journey scouts were dispatched in advance to learn about conditions at the home camp. They reported back to the expedition. Nobody who had been left behind dared come forward to meet the warriors. To do so would have been an omen of misfortune. Upon returning to camp each man went directly to his own dwelling. Then the women prepared a steam bath for those men who had been wounded. This sudatory possessed especially strong properties because it included a specimen of every tree that the expedition had encountered on its homeward trip. Weekly for a month or so after the return the men danced with the combed enemy scalps on their heads. This helped them "to forget the fighting." Contact between a woman and a scalp had to be avoided lest the warrior lose his strength. Only the man who had detached the trophy wore it in ritual. At other times the scalp remained in a smoked-skin container.

[304] A tattooed line crossing the upper arm just below the shoulder designated a man's participation in a war party. The number of such stripes revealed his war record.* While prestige did not constitute a primary motivation for fighting, a record of successful war participation enhanced a man's standing. For a year or two (?) the warrior received gifts of food, ostensibly to honor him but because hunting remained a dangerous occupation for a man who had killed human beings. If "game blood" became mixed with human blood that he had shed, it would make the man "heavy." It remains problematical whether such avoidances constituted disabilities for the man. More likely, it may be argued, refraining from hunting focused attention on the individual that rewarded him for his war effort. It may also be questioned whether a group living close to the level of subsistence could support even one nonproductive male per band for one or two years.

[304] Warfare or, more specifically, contact with killing, rendered a man unfit for sexual intercourse. Hence a two-month avoidance of cohabitation followed his return. Violation of this taboo might mean the death of his children. The hunting and cohabitation avoidances reveal the ambivalent felt to exist between enemy killing on the one hand and sex or hunting on the other. In this connection it may be significant that the contemporary Kaska unconsciously perceive colyn as akin to hunting.*

471 *Dease River Kaska.* Neither primary family nor extensive band exercised exclusive ownership rights over hunting or fishing areas. Generally, however, a band sought permission before moving into an area which another group was currently exploiting. Consent always followed, but the persons nevertheless reveals a conception of ownership probably coupled with an awareness that a given area could support only a limited number of persons.

681 The community dealt harshly with theft, behavior that made a man comparable to a dog. Depending on the gravity of his offense the punishment of a detected thief ranged

* The prestige Lessie' incorporation. Lessie, *Social Culture of the Western Ojibwa* (1942), 108.

* Among the Fort River Kaska a line was tattooed from the corner of the eye or mouth for each enemy killed. The Cree people, however, made their lines on the top of the bicep of the right arm. Osgood, *Contributions to the Ethnography of the Kaska* (1936), 57, 58.

* Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 252, 256.

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Upper Liard

755 Certain therapeutic rites required silence in order to be effective. Thus a shaman
787 performed at a considerable distance from the sick camp, never within range of the sound of barking dogs. Probably under such circumstances a healer caused a sorcerer's evil to recoil on the latter. Detection of a sorcerer was easy if it happened that somebody remained conspicuously absent from a curing ceremony. Against the absent one the shaman directed the finger of guilt.

783 Confession helped to diagnose illness resulting from broken taboos and apparently also possessed curative value in itself. The shaman asked, "You ever bother your sister?" "You ever kill an otter?" "How you kill mink?" "You ever steal?" When the patient had admitted an offense the conjuror warned him not to repeat the deed upon recovery.

177 Following contact with Europeans a hunter came to perform a ritual to alleviate
789 intense cold. He fired a dry root ("wolverine medicine") from a shotgun. Informants
807 did not recognize the reference to "lucky number." The prevailing material, however,
832 suggests strongly that the number "four" possessed special significance. Apart from love songs, which may have been used with the idea of magically attracting a member of the opposite sex, love magic occupied little attention.*

759 As already indicated people sometimes used their magical power against other people. For example a reported shaman who felt slighted or ridiculed might use sorcery to vengeance against his real or fancied detractors. People took care not to annoy a shaman. He should be "only pleased," said an informant. A man whose temperament favored sorcery sought to increase his power by dreaming of animals like the mink and otter but not all persons were sorcerers whose power emanated from these spirits. A sorcerer tried to "steal" his victim's wind, perhaps first securing a piece of the latter's clothing. Burial of such a possession in the ground brought about death. (Note the use of burial in this context.) A person suspecting sorcery might pay to have his wind recovered. In this way really malevolent practitioners injured women. Sorcerers [illegible] not only death but also illness, physical and mental, and also "troubled" a [illegible] by ruining his hunting ability. A good hunter knew that he had been sorcerized when, [illegible] he failed to strike the animal with his weapon. Black magic held a danger of mental illness for the evil magician, who in some cases was also [illegible] with the community's concern. Sorcerers, however, could evade retribution by slipping through their enemies' hands. An informant related a story about two Tlingit shamans, one of whom was evil. They both flew through the air. The good man disappeared after a time but his

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The wind had gone so far away that the patient was close to death. During the interval of sorcery prominent nobody might have the troubling. After perhaps four hours the men simultaneously returned to consciousness and resumed their singing. Part of the paraphernalia used in the rite consisted of a fan along with feathers. This the practitioner waited around the patient's waist and used to pull the latter from his bed. In that way he was pulled back to life, the informant explained. The purpose of going into a trance to retrieve an errant soul is close to the Haisla purpose of shamanism. The fan fastened to the patient needs further definition research.

* Love magic has been reported for the Tahltan. In one particular variety a white rock was obtained from the ground and rubbed into pulverized. The woman's image was then drawn on a piece of skin and anointed with the pulverized. If the charm was to be successful the pulverized stuff and at the same time the woman found herself attracted to the magician.

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755 pointed out that in illness all the wind did not leave the body—this would have caused
[783] death. To cure, a shaman blew some of his wind into the patient's body. No recollection
[754] of confession was admitted but Field's anecdote above suggests that practice. Sorcery
[784] sometimes resulted in death, or was believed to have that power. The evidence on making snowshoes before snow lay on the ground obtained among the Frances Lake people as it did in the upper Liard Valley.

MEDICINE AND SURGERY

857 It appears that, compared to the magical rites discussed above, relatively less dogmatic attitudes governed the methods of therapy to be described in this section. Some of the techniques to be discussed may even have been supported by an awareness of their empirically verifiable relationship to the desired end.

857 *Upper Liard Kaska.* Charcoal rubbed under the eyes prevented snow blindness. To
278 cure the affliction the sore eyes were bathed in infusions of alder or tamarack bark. No help for snow blindness came from the application of spruce gum nor was bleeding ever used for this purpose. Spruce gum helped to treat tilacum, while the young flowers of the fireweed boiled in water provided a drink that relieved muscular pains. An unidentified white root (*ingaia*), with an odor as penetrating as horse-radish, growing in mountainous country cleared up head congestion resulting from colds. After grinding it and mixing it with grease, a sufferer breathed the vapor through each nostril in turn. Sweet berries afforded protection from colds. Both sexes took such herbs regularly from about
[845] the age of ten. Men provided women in the sweat lodge. Bathing in the sulphurous hot springs of the Cassiar possessed no therapeutic value.*

Dease River Kaska. People used balsam gum to staunch the flow of blood from a cut
75 wound then bound the wound with dry grass. The same substance applied to the inner
857 corners of each eye relieved snow blindness without bandaging. Snow blindness was
278 caused by small "white bugs" springing from the snow into the victim's eyes. Snow also bothered small black insects (*ts'ununla*) that had an injurious effects on human beings.* A remedy prevented fatal bleeding in case of a severed artery. Animal grease or brains relieved the pain of burns. Broken bones were set by shamans, the limb being stretched and tightly bound with a layer of grass wrapped around with varnish-cloth line. The casing remained in place for several months or until the break healed. Dove-shot "sickness," contributed by sitting in the cold and damp, could be relieved overnight by wrapping and binding the feet with grass. To draw frozen parts of the body people gently rubbed snow on the affected part. Also the frozen organ might be immersed in extremely cold water. Remedies for earaches were denied. Enemas are probable but their nature could not be recalled precisely. To treat colds, urinate a vessel was heated with a hot pole. The patient then crouched over the liquid, his head covered with a skin, and inhaled the fumes. Presumably human urine is indicated.

* On other contemporary remedies, a few of which, like the inhalation of urine fumes, probably have roots in the aboriginal period, see Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 327.

* "Small black insects" were thought by the Fort Selkirk Hare to cause snow blindness. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 125.